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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE WORLD
SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

OUTCOME OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: DRAFT DECLARATION AND DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Views of Governments on a draft declaration and a draft programme of action

Note by the Secretary-General

1. At its first session, held in New York in February 1994, the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development invited Governments to communicate their views on a draft declaration and a draft programme of action to the Secretariat and requested the Secretariat to circulate those views at its second session.

2. The Secretary-General is transmitting herewith the views received as of 28 June 1994. These include replies from Austria, Canada, Cuba, Greece (on behalf of the European Union) and Ukraine. Subsequent replies will be circulated in an addendum.

* A/CONF.166/PC/14.

AUSTRIA

[Original: English]

[22 June 1994]

1. The World Summit for Social Development should constitute the beginning of a new phase of cooperation among Member States in the area of social development with the aim of achieving social peace and stability. The outcome of the Summit should be to the benefit not only of Member States; it should also directly benefit their citizens. The Summit should enhance international cooperation with a view to solving international problems in the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian fields. The recommendations of the Summit should build upon the relevant results of recent United Nations conferences (such as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 and the International Conference on Population and Development, to be held in 1994). This could lead to the emergence of a new comprehensive development paradigm.

2. The Summit should emphasize the security dimension of social development. It should aim at elaborating a comprehensive model of human security.

3. The Summit should be conscious of the continued validity of and build upon the Guiding Principles for Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in the Near Future. These principles were adopted by the Interregional Consultation on Developmental Social Welfare Policies and Programmes in Vienna in September 1987. They continue to provide a feasible set of general recommendations for action at the national, regional and international levels. The Summit should also take into account the contributions of the relevant units of the United Nations system. The regional expertise of the United Nations regional commissions will be of value.

4. The Summit should allow for a critical discussion of the development model that currently prevails in the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. Interdependencies between patterns of consumption and production on the one hand and phenomena of social disintegration within industrialized countries, impact on global natural resources and imbalances in the North-South relationship, on the other hand, should be examined.

5. The Summit should aim at mobilizing all international organizations with mandates in the social area. It should endeavour to arrive at a division of labour that would assign clear responsibilities to the different organizations. The International Labour Organization, in addition to its manifold technical cooperation activities, plays an important role, in particular with regard to setting international norms. These international norms need to be better publicized. They should be used more thoroughly as the basis for decisions in international cooperation, in particular development cooperation.

6. Since there is general agreement about the need to focus on selected priority areas and to make concrete proposals, the Summit should lead to concrete action-oriented plans and programmes that can be monitored on an

ongoing basis. In this context, Austria fully supports the concept of fixed targets, as has been advocated by the Secretary-General.

7. Austria emphasizes the importance of participatory ("bottom-up") approaches in social development. The Summit should therefore take fully into account the important role of the non-governmental sector (non-governmental organizations, media, corporate business, academia etc.).

8. The Summit should provide States with new incentives and ideas to focus their efforts on sustainable social development. It should emphasize that the primary responsibility for social development rests with the national authorities. Each country has to set its national social objectives. No single social strategy or model of development can be applied to all countries. The Summit should be aware of the financial constraints faced by all countries. It should underline the necessity of shifting resources towards investments with high social multiplier effects. Employment-promoting measures could generate productive employment, which, in turn, could help reduce poverty and contribute to social cohesion. Employment should become a central objective of investment.

9. World-wide unemployment will require international solutions since no country is able to overcome this problem by itself. According to European studies, additional jobs have been created in the past 10 years primarily through governmental schemes. Transnational investments in infrastructure and transport projects could create jobs, provide an exchange of goods and contribute towards environmental protection.

10. The Summit should highlight the importance of measures aimed at reducing and eliminating poverty among women, counteracting the feminization of poverty, ensuring equal access for both sexes to social services, family planning, child-care institutions and adequate housing. The problems of social groups that are particularly threatened by poverty, such as single mothers, divorced women, female migrants and older women, should be given due consideration.

11. The Summit should highlight the importance of measures aimed at promoting women in the economy with a view to achieving equality of opportunity in employment. The necessity of a novel evaluation of criteria for job remuneration should be underlined. A new evaluation of the "traditional" qualifications of men and women could contribute to eliminating the danger of impoverishment for women who have jobs but whose salaries are very close to the poverty line.

12. In the priority area of "productive employment", the Summit should endeavour to give stronger recognition to such activities as care for the young, the old and the sick and preservation of the environment, which are essential for the cohesion of all societies. This recognition should be reflected in the long term in the national accounts. Furthermore, specific efforts to combat unemployment are imperative.

13. In view of the danger of destabilization of societies as a result of illegal drug trafficking, organized transnational crime and migration movements, the Summit should give special consideration to the need for global cooperation in these fields, in particular through the United Nations system.

14. The Summit should recommend measures to promote endeavours of grass-roots groupings (village communities, tribal units) for the sustainable use of fragile eco-systems and for the alleviation of poverty in these areas. Ecologically sound alternative forms of economic activity (e.g., use of renewable energy, new forms of irrigation and cultivation), through the training of instructors, the bestowal of tools and the spreading of new techniques through social interaction, should be promoted.

CANADA

[Original: English]

[7 April 1994]

1. With regard to the draft declaration, the Government of Canada would like to underscore the following:

(a) The Declaration should reaffirm the centrality of people in development, as articulated in the Declaration of the Children's Summit and the Rio Declaration. This people-centred approach should be shown as especially important in social development. In building on the Rio consensus, the Government supports the suggestion made by several delegations that this approach be called "sustainable human development".

(b) The goals of the Declaration should also articulate a vision of a better world towards which all actors can strive - more secure for people (men and women), more peaceful, more just, more fair, more caring and free of hunger, poverty and war. While the ideal may be a long-term goal, this vision could strengthen the emerging international ethic that insists that minimum acceptable standards of human well-being be adopted and achieved within specified time horizons.

(c) The Declaration should be a clear and simple document that can be used to communicate with and promote the vision and goals of the Summit among ordinary people and serve as an instrument of education for social development, as is the case with the Declaration of the Children's Summit.

2. With regard to the draft plan of action:

(a) The Secretariat's summary of the main points of the discussion at the first session of the Preparatory Committee covers the full range of elements of the "enabling environment" - economic/financial, political, cultural, social/institutional and environmental. Undue attention should not be paid to the economic/financial ones since that would be divisive and inadequate.

(b) The Government is concerned that common elements in the three core issues, such as human security, human rights, democratic development, good governance, gender equity, the rights of indigenous people, participation, education, health, capacity development and empowerment of people, be given careful attention, both in the individual chapters devoted to these themes and

in a separate chapter where these various elements can be brought together and treated in a systematic and integrated way.

(c) The statement that the Plan of Action should lead to strategies for social development at the various levels will require special attention. While the notion of a global strategy has been resisted, it would be unfortunate if the Plan of Action did not facilitate and indeed strongly encourage the formation of strategies. For this to take place with any degree of predictability will require that the Plan of Action contain a chapter that addresses the issues and processes of strategy formation. Such a chapter could bring together in one place all the elements dispersed in the various substantive chapters of the Plan that require action by national Governments, multilateral organizations and so on. This will facilitate the development by Governments, in concert with their civil society partners, of national strategies, as well as the development of strategies at subnational levels, particularly at the community level. Similarly, international development agencies and multilateral agencies would be better able to develop strategies for supporting national strategies and programmes. Again, the Plan of Action of the Children's Summit provides some excellent pointers in this direction. The Plan of Action should require that such national and international strategies or programmes incorporate existing plans and programmes in social development (such as those for children, education for all, health etc.) and be completed by a certain date after the Summit.

(d) Another aspect that will require that elements in the substantive chapters be pulled together is the role and needs of different actors and partners in civil society at both national and international levels, such as non-governmental organizations, the private sector, indigenous people, women, youth, and vulnerable groups. Such a chapter would provide an overview of their strategic roles and commitments, and assess the kinds of supports they would require, such as capacity development, to ensure their effective participation in the Plan of Action.

(e) Under operational requirements for implementation of the Plan of Action, the Government would like to stress the need for clear definitions of results to be achieved, systematic information and data, clear indicators of progress in measurable terms, a reporting and monitoring plan and a highly visible international means of publicizing achievements. The purpose would be to keep the focus on results and to create a positive spirit and motivation for their achievement. It should be structured to allow regional comparisons and should measure both national achievements and contributions to the achievements of others. Something akin to the report prepared by the United Nations Children's Fund on the Children's Summit, The Progress of Nations, could be envisaged.

CUBA

[Original: Spanish]

[6 June 1994]

1. The Government of Cuba wishes its views on the question of Social Development to be taken into consideration in the drafting of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Summit for Social Development. Consequently, it requests that the following be made available to the Preparatory Committee:

Social problems should be accorded greater importance in the agenda of international organizations, and the item on Social Development must be approached from the point of view of its interrelationship with the economic factors currently being discussed in various forums;

Sustainable growth, now the object of world attention, which is to be considered at the Summit for Social Development, will not be attainable without a more equitable distribution of wealth throughout the world, so as to avoid a situation in which there is sustainable growth for one region of the world and underdevelopment in another;

Each country should have full freedom to design its own social development strategy in the light of its fundamental priorities and goals, and with particular attention to its special characteristics, individual features and specific situation; this is the only way to ensure that policy strategies are compatible with the urgent needs of each people. Achieving social development is above all the responsibility of each Government, and Governments must take the measures necessary to obtain the resources needed for the establishment and implementation of strategies more in keeping with their actual conditions;

Moreover, high priority should be given to promoting international cooperation for development and accelerating the mobilization of resources for social development through the United Nations system;

Education for all, without exclusivism or discrimination of any kind, should be a prerequisite for achieving greater social development, and as such, a priority goal.

2. The Summit will take place amid strong indications of moral and social crisis in numerous societies, as manifested in violence, intolerance, alienation, racism, xenophobia, increasing drug addiction, sharper inequities, and disparities in living conditions and in opportunities for popular participation. Given those realities, we would like to urge the Preparatory Committee, in planning the work of the Summit, to bear in mind the persistence of those negative phenomena, which obviously conspire against harmonious social development.

3. In this context, there are other factors that can be seen as potential obstacles to development and must be removed through the attainment of full employment, the elimination of poverty and the integration through justice of full respect for human rights in society; other obstacles are the limitations

imposed on the implementation of the right to development, as well as the non-satisfaction of basic needs such as food, housing and social security among others. These considerations must be dealt with in the work programme of the Preparatory Committee as well as in the agenda of the Summit itself.

4. Cuba is actively participating in the preparatory work for the Summit, and will spare no effort to achieve a balance in the distribution of resources enabling the third world countries to improve their standard of living.

GREECE

(on behalf of the European Union)

[Original: English]

[4 May 1994]

ELEMENTS FOR A DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION

1. Common principles of action:

(a) Recognition of the interrelationships and complementarities among the three core issues;

(b) Human rights, democracy and popular participation;

(c) Gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(d) The role of social partners and civic society;

(e) The primary responsibility of national Governments in implementing policy proposals in the Plan of Action;

(f) Role of international cooperation in providing appropriate support for the national implementation of the Plan of Action.

2. Social integration:

(a) Equality and social justice:

(i) Ensuring equal opportunity;

(ii) Promoting tolerance and non-discrimination;

(iii) Gender equality and empowerment of women;

(iv) Providing universal access to education and health;

(v) Protecting cultural diversity;

(vi) Promoting the integration of youth in civic society;

(vii) Improving the social services system with particular attention to people with special needs, including the aged and persons with disabilities;

(b) Social participation:

(i) Bringing Government closer to the people;

(ii) Encouraging participation in Government and decision-making process;

(iii) Promoting and facilitating community organization, participation and action at local and national levels;

(iv) Promoting the right to organize;

(v) Promoting integration of migrants;

(vi) Protecting and integrating groups and people with special needs;

(vii) Protecting the rights and promoting the welfare of persons belonging to minorities;

(viii) Promoting access to information.

3. Alleviation and reduction of poverty:

(a) Mobilizing national and international efforts to reduce poverty and promote equity:

(i) Improving living standards for all through economic growth and reform;

(ii) Promoting a more equitable distribution of wealth and income;

(iii) Improving participation and empowerment of the poor;

(iv) Addressing the feminization of poverty;

(v) Strengthening the production capacity of the poor and of the marginalized groups and ensuring that all can enjoy equal access to productive resources;

(vi) Stressing the role of the national taxation systems;

(b) Monitoring poverty and assessing anti-poverty programmes:

(i) Applying and when appropriate establishing indicators of poverty;

(ii) Improving existing monitoring mechanisms, national and international;

(iii) Improving the collection, analysis and dissemination of information;

(iv) The fight against poverty should be an integral part in both preparation and implementation of all development policies and programmes;

(c) Providing social services:

(i) Improving basic education and health care, safe drinking water and sanitation for the poor;

(ii) Supporting families and informal community services;

(iii) Educational and training programmes to enable the poor to participate and exercise their rights;

(d) Ways of alleviating and reducing poverty:

(i) Promoting structural reforms aimed at improving the framework conditions for poverty alleviation;

(ii) Encouraging and supporting community self-help activities;

(iii) Promoting access to land and credit;

(iv) Improving rural health, water supplies and other infrastructure, including transportation;

(v) Improving availability of agricultural inputs;

(vi) Improving rural markets;

(vii) Promoting non-agricultural production in rural areas;

(viii) Improving conditions in the informal sector;

(ix) Improving public, health, sanitation and shelter for urban poor;

(x) Integration and coordination of efforts to protect the environment and efforts to alleviate poverty;

(xi) Increasing research on sustainable production techniques;

(xii) Employing people in conservation programmes;

(e) Strengthening social security policies and programmes:

(i) Alleviating poverty by employment and growth that creates jobs;

(ii) Improving conditions for the working poor;

(iii) Developing, where appropriate, alternatives to traditional welfare;

(iv) Providing appropriate assistance to single parents and their children;

(v) Protecting all children from abuse and exploitation;

(vi) Support and adaptation of non-official systems of social protection and self-help institutions;

(vii) Promoting social protection systems to include the poor.

4. Expansion of productive employment:

(a) Promoting investment and sustained economic growth:

(i) Strengthening the private sector's potential to create new jobs;

(ii) Stimulating job-creating production capacities;

(iii) Facilitating the establishment and activities of small business;

(iv) Supporting development of local financial intermediaries (for savings and credit);

(v) Promoting structural adjustment and reform, including as regards the contribution of such reforms to restore economic growth and job creation and to ensure that the design and implementation of such programmes incorporate the social dimension;

(vi) Promoting trade liberalization, opening up national markets to external competitors;

(vii) Promoting improved resource flows to the poorest countries, including that of foreign direct investment;

(viii) Promoting appropriate investment in research and development;

(ix) Removing excessive rigidities resulting from regulation and reducing non-wage costs, without derogating from the basic rights of workers;

(b) Improving labour markets:

(i) Improving information on employment opportunities;

(ii) Reducing disincentives to hire workers;

(iii) Combining labour flexibility with economic security;

(iv) Stressing the responsibilities of each of the social partners;

(v) Integrating the informal sector;

(c) Developing effective education and training programmes;

(d) Improving employment for vulnerable groups:

(i) Improving integration in the workplace of persons with disabilities;

(ii) Facilitating:

a. Productive employment and advancement of women;

b. Productive employment of young people;

c. Integration of foreign employees into society;

d. Active labour measures to enhance the skills of the long-term unemployed, those in low-paid or unskilled jobs or those affected by restructuring of their current jobs or occupation;

(e) Ensuring respect of the basic rights of workers;

(f) New approaches to employment:

(i) Facilitating developments in job-intensive sectors;

(ii) Creation of employment opportunities based on social utility;

(iii) Creation of productive employment linked to new requirements related to the quality of life and the protection of the environment;

(iv) Creation of alternative forms of work.

5. International cooperation on the basis of partnership for social development:

(a) Improving the effectiveness of coherent, sound national economic and social policies through international cooperation;

(b) Promoting adjustments and reforms in order to become more efficient and competitive and to promote stability-oriented economic growth, higher employment, increasing incomes and social integration;

(c) Promoting trade liberalization, opening up national markets, stimulating international trade in goods and services, liberalizing capital markets and flows, improving the investment climate, in particular cross-border business cooperation and foreign direct investments;

(d) Strengthening resource flows, particularly non-debt-creating flows, to poor countries and applying fully the international debt strategy in appropriate forums, such as the Paris Club, to alleviate debt-service burdens, in particular to poor and highly indebted economies;

(e) Ensuring that the social dimension is taken into account when developing and implementing structural adjustment programmes;

(f) Focusing development cooperation policies on the fight against poverty and the promotion of sustainable human development;

(g) Promoting an integrated national approach in the formulation of economic and social policies;

(h) Promoting policies for economic growth with social justice.

6. Recommendations for action by the United Nations system:

(a) Support national efforts to implement the Plan of Action;

(b) Enhance coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations system within existing resources;

(c) Promote cooperation between international organizations, bilateral donors and financial institutions in the definition and implementation of anti-poverty and sustainable human development programmes;

(d) Promote cooperation at all levels with the international financial institutions, the World Trade Organization and the International Labour Organization;

(e) Support the important role of the International Labour Organization in the follow-up;

(f) Stress the need for appropriate monitoring of the follow-up of the Summit within existing United Nations structures, including the role of the non-governmental organizations.

UKRAINE

[Original: Russian]

[2 June 1994]

1. The report of the Secretary-General submitted to the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development at its first session (A/CONF.166/PC/6) generally reflected the current situation and tendencies, as well as existing problems, in the area of global social development. It can serve as a good background for further defining the major directions of activities at both national and international levels.

2. The following points would be emphasized. In the above-mentioned report, several references were made to specific problems in the area of social development facing the countries in transition (paras. 49, 88, 104, 133, 151, 152). Those problems require more attention on the part of the international organizations.

3. The current status of the socio-political, economic and demographic crisis has forced the countries in transition to seek cooperation with the

international organizations. Such cooperation is necessary for the following reasons: (i) the new geo-political situation as well as the absence in some countries, like Ukraine, of the experience of independent development; and (ii) the non-standard and unique nature of the current socio-economic development of the countries in transition.

4. Given the fact that the majority of the population has suffered from the current socio-economic conditions (e.g., in Ukraine, more than 70 per cent of the population is below the poverty line), cooperation with the international organizations should be directed towards social support and protection of the population.

5. To achieve this, efforts should aim at:

(a) Formulating the socio-economic strategies to overcome the crisis and to develop conditions for the normal functioning of the countries adjusting to the market economy. Such strategies should be specifically designed for each country, or, alternatively, they should adapt the experience gained by other countries in transition which have already passed certain stages of reform;

(b) Providing, with the support of the international organizations, the methodological assistance for carrying out economic and social reforms (e.g., privatization). This kind of assistance, besides its direct effect on the intensity of economic development, will also provide for the social protection of the population under the new conditions of market economy and, in turn, diminish the economic burden on the state budget, as well as stimulate the development of the most prospective forms of small enterprises;

(c) Assisting in the development of the required labour force forecast. This will allow for developing a realistic plan with regard to the number of required specialists, will optimize expenditures for their training and will diminish the level of unemployment;

(d) Establishing on the basis of international experience, a system of targeted protection for the most vulnerable population groups, which would envisage involvement of non-State budgetary resources, including those of the international organizations, as well as designing the most effective approach to resource utilization;

(e) Developing, with the assistance of the International Labour Organization, recommendations for social protection of the working population on the basis of sustaining the necessary level of work remuneration (first of all, by developing a methodology for assessing a reasonable level of minimum salary, which has been recommended by the International Labour Organization as an effective approach to State protection of employees);

(f) Studying and summarizing the information provided by the World Health Organization regarding the effectiveness of different schemes of health insurance with a view to their possible merger with the already existing State health-care systems;

(g) Coordinating international efforts to alleviate the socio-demographic consequences of the Chernobyl disaster in the most affected countries, and in particular in Ukraine, which has been experiencing the most adverse after-effects of the disaster for the development and even the survival of the population in the affected areas;

(h) Strengthening international cooperation for the prevention of conflicts leading to forced migration and increased numbers of refugees, whose arrival in the countries in transition imposes an additional burden on those countries and leads to increasing social tension.